

[Musonius Rufus - suite]

Auteur : Foucault, Michel

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XIII B

WHAT IS THE CHIEF END OF MARRIAGE?

Therefore those who contemplate marriage ought to have regard neither for family, whether either one be of high-born parents, nor for wealth, whether on either side there be great possessions, nor for physical traits, whether one or the other have beauty. For neither wealth nor beauty nor high birth is effective in promoting partnership of interest or sympathy, nor again are they significant for producing children. But as for the body it is enough for marriage that it be healthy, of normal appearance, and capable of hard work, such as would be less exposed to the snares of tempters, better adapted to perform physical labor, and not wanting in strength to beget or to bear children. With respect to character or soul one should expect that it be habituated to self-control and justice, and in a word, naturally disposed to virtue. <These qualities should be present in both man and wife.> For without sympathy of mind and character between husband and wife, what marriage can be good, what partnership advantageous? How could two human beings who are base have sympathy of spirit one with the other? Or how could one that is good be in harmony with one that is bad? No more than a crooked piece of wood could be fitted to a straight one, or two crooked ones be put together. For the crooked one will not fit another crooked one, and much less the opposite, a crooked with a straight one. So a wicked man is not friendly to a wicked one, nor does he agree with him, and much less with a good man.

XIV

IS MARRIAGE A HANDICAP FOR THE PURSUIT OF PHILOSOPHY?

Again when someone said that marriage and living with a wife seemed to him a handicap to the pursuit of philosophy, Musonius said that it was no handicap to Pythagoras, nor to Socrates, nor to Crates, each of whom lived with a wife, and one could not

13 A connecting sentence seems to have dropped out of the Greek text at this point.

19 f. Cf. Plato *Lysis* 214D.



Amel Cree
t IV or 5/16

